GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1293
ANSWERED ON:02.08.2005
LABOURERS IN TEA INDUSTRY
Baxla Shri Joachim

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware of the problems of Tea Labourers particularly in Jalpaiguri and Darjeeling;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government has ever tried to address these problems;

(d) if not, the reasons therefor;

(e) whether the Government has formed a Committee or Board to look into the problems of labourers working in the Tea Industry of West Bengal;

(f) if so, the details thereof; and

(g) if not, the time by which the Committee or Board is likely to be formed?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN)

(a) to (d): The service conditions of the workers of the plantation industry in the country, including those in Jalpaiguri and Darjeeling, are governed by various Acts such as the Plantations Labour Act, Provident Fund & Miscellaneous Provisions Act, Workmen`s Compensation Act, Payment of Gratuity Act, Payment of Bonus Act, Minimum Wages Act, Maternity Benefit Act etc. The concerned State Governments are required to take action in case of violations. Tea industry wages are settled through bipartitite and tripartite periodic settlement. With regard to the Charter of Demands of the tea garden workers in North Bengal, including the districts of Darjeeling and Jalpaiguri, a memorandum of settlement has been signed on 25.7.2005 between the Workers` Union and the Employer`s Associations.

(e) to (g): No Sir. However, the recent problems of the labour, in the context of the recent wage negotiations, have been considered through discussions with the intervention of the State Government. There is a Tea Advisory Committee to monitor the implementation of the recommendations of stakeholders` conference on tea held on 16th & 17th September, 2004, which also cover labour issues.